

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 HA-05 /074 W

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FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3826

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 2379

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, GV

SUBJECT: CIVIL RIGHTS IN GUINEA: NEW AMNESTIES

1. ACCORDING TO RELIABLE SOURCE, GOG AMNESTIED AND FREED 42 POLITICAL PRISONERS EVENING OF DECEMBER 19. INCLUDED WERE THREE LEBANESE REMAINING FROM 1971 POST-PORTUGUESE INVASION ARREST WAVE: ELIE HAYECK, MERCHANT, CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF SEKOU TOURE, NATIONALITY FRENCH-LEBANESE-GUINEAN; RACHID ABOUCHAKRA, LEBANESE-GUINEAN; EDOUARD KARAM, LEBANESE-GUINEAN. REST OF LIBERATED PRISONERS ARE PRESUMED TO BE GUINEANS.

2. LEBANESE WERE SUBJECT OF INTERVENTION BY UN SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM VIA FRENCH AMBASSADOR LEWIN EARLIER IN YEAR. LEBANESE EMBASSY ALSO HAD MADE INTERVENTIONS.

3. ABOVE AMNESTY FOLLOWS RELEASE OF SEVERAL DOZEN POLITICAL PRISONERS, MOSTLY LOW-RANKING MILITARY PERSONNEL, A FEW MONTHS AGO, ABOUT OCTOBER, ACCORDING TO SOURCE.

4. ALSO SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, EX-WIFE OF NOTED GUINEAN
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WRITER CAMARA LAYE (NOW AN OPPONENT-IN-EXILE OF SEKOU TOURE) WAS ALLOWED TO DEPART GUINEA, QUIETLY AND PERMANENTLY, TO ABIDJAN. SHE HAD BEEN RELEASED FROM PRISON DURING THE MAY 1977 AMNESTY AND AFTERWARD RECEIVED MEDICAL TREATMENT AT KAMSAR HOSPITAL.

5. SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, AT REQUEST OF FRENCH AMBASSADOR

LEWIN, SEKOU TOURE PERMITTED TWO GRANDCHILDREN OF JEAN-PAUL ALATA, AUTHOR OF "PRISON D'AFRIQUE", TO REJOIN THEIR MOTHER IN CONAKRY. AFTER PUBLICATION OF ALATA'S BOOK, THEY HAD BEEN SENT TO INTERIOR TO LIVE SEPARATED FROM MOTHER. LEWIN SEES THIS AS SMALL BUT ENCOURAGING SIGN OF SEKOU TOURE'S CURRENT WILLINGNESS TO HEED VOICES OF "FRIENDS" URGING A MORE CLEMENT APPROACH IN HUMANITARIAN MATTERS.

6. DURING EARLY DECEMBER CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF CATHOLICISM IN GUINEA (SEE EMBASSY A-53, DECEMBER 15, 1977), RUMORS CIRCULATED THAT GOG WAS CONSIDERING RELEASE OF ARCHBISHOP TCHIDIMBO, A PRISONER SINCE EARLY 1970'S. VATICAN HAS NOT BEEN ACTIVE IN TCHIDIMBO'S BEHALF, ACCORDING TO LEWIN, BUT WIDELY PUBLICIZED SEKOU TOURE SPEECH HAILING ANNIVERSARY GAVE LOCAL CATHOLICS HOPE.
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